

# King County Department of Community and Human Services

## Strategic Plan Subregional Planning:

### Results from the East Urban Subregion

#### Background and Overview

On February 10, 1997 the Metropolitan King County Council approved the Strategic Plan for the Community Services Division (CSD) of the King County Department of Community and Human Services. The Strategic Plan is a plan for the funding years 1998 through 2000. The purpose of the Plan is to establish broad direction for the planning and implementation of community-based human services provided through CSD in King County; it does not cover human services provided through other County divisions and departments. The Plan implements CSD's mission to work in partnership with communities and other funders to develop, support, and provide human services which emphasize prevention, intervention, and community education, as well as to provide decent, affordable housing.

A major focus of the Plan is to use information on subregional needs and priorities to improve service responsiveness. While all social issues and service needs span King County, the great diversity within the County means that many issues are of high priority to one subregion but of lower priority to another. Because CSD is aware of the subregional differences and wants to work with communities in the subregions to craft services delivery mixes that meet their needs, forming partnerships with local jurisdictions and funders is a high priority.

Before subregional planning could begin, the subregions had to be defined. The adopted subregion definitions were developed based on combinations of school districts within King County, with some adjustment for existing jurisdictional boundaries. The main criteria for defining subregions was that residents and communities could identify with their subregion. Stakeholder feedback indicated that school districts are less confusing than cities and include all of the unincorporated areas in King County. Additionally, because rural areas will have constraints on growth and development that urban areas will not experience, rural and urban areas are established as separate subregions.

The final definition of subregions was reviewed by the Interjurisdictional Work Group, comprised of staff of the Metropolitan King County Council Regional Policy Committee (RPC), and the Planning Committee of the King County Children and Families Commission. The subregions are: Seattle, North Urban, East Urban, East Rural, South Urban, South Rural, and Vashon Island. (see map in Appendix A).

#### Selection of a Test Subregion

It was very clear through CSD's strategic planning process that, before subregional planning could be implemented throughout the county, the process should first be tried in a single subregion. This would provide the opportunity to test the feasibility of joint subregional planning among jurisdictions and other funders of human services. The results of this test would be used to refine the planning process for other subregions in King County. The intent is that all subregional planning will be completed before 2001.

The East Urban subregion was selected as the test subregion. Several factors led to its selection. The subregion had a small number of cities within its boundaries, making it manageable as a test case. Representatives of cities in the East Urban subregion had been very active in the Interjurisdictional Work Group of the RPC, which reviewed and modified the plan at the direction of the Metropolitan King County Council. Also, Bellevue, the subregion's largest city, and Redmond were preparing to do a needs assessment in the summer of 1997. This presented a collaborative opportunity for King

County to partner with and expand on Bellevue and Redmond's efforts and gather consistent needs information on the entire subregion.

## **The Planning Process**

A preliminary step in the subregional process was to form a collaborative team with local jurisdictions to conduct the planning process. Initially, representatives of all the municipalities and Unincorporated Area Councils were invited to participate with CSD staff in the East Urban subregional planning process. Ultimately, representatives of the human services divisions of Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Mercer Island, and Redmond, as well as representatives of United Way, Eastside Human Services Alliance, Partnership for a Healthy Community, Department of Social and Health Services, and the Community Services Division (CSD) met as the East Urban Joint Collaboration Team. The team was responsible for overseeing the needs assessment process and coordinating with other stakeholders to identify common human services needs, funding patterns and service gaps within the subregion.

The newly formed East Urban Joint Collaboration Team took as its first task the review of existing needs assessment and planning documents (see Appendix B). This review ensured that all team members had a solid grounding in what was already known about the subregion and were aware of other on-going planning efforts which might require coordination.

The second step was a needs assessment survey. In order to have consistent needs information on the entire subregion, King County collaborated with Bellevue and Redmond to conduct a needs assessment survey during the late summer of 1997. The team prepared a summary report on the identified human service needs from the survey. (Highlights of the needs assessment survey are presented in Appendix C.) This summary was circulated to members of the Eastside Human Services Alliance for their review and comment.

Finally, the combined summary of human service needs, as described in the review of existing documents, needs assessment survey and comments of EHSA members, was presented to interested East Urban human service providers for review and comment at a meeting held on January 28, 1998. The purpose of the meeting was to:

1. review the priority needs from the East Urban citizen needs assessment survey and identify priorities from providers' perspective, and
2. clarify and explain the human service needs as seen by providers.

A follow-up meeting was held in March, 1998 in which East Urban stakeholders were asked to assist in identifying service gaps and service strengths in the subregion and to determine which of the identified service needs would best respond to collaborative efforts among funders.

The work team reviewed stakeholder comments along with the other needs materials to determine the needs priorities in which more attention and possibly more services were needed. The priorities are presented in a later section of this report. They offer funders and other stakeholders a guide for investments to supplement existing human services. Jointly and independently, funders and stakeholders can consider possible strategies for addressing the priority needs.

## **EAST URBAN PROFILE**

To understand the human services needs in the East Urban subregion, it is first necessary to understand the context in which they occur. The East Urban subregion is comprised of the Bellevue, Issaquah, Lake Washington and Mercer Island school districts. It includes the cities of Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Mercer Island, Newcastle,

Redmond, and the Point Cities (Beaux Arts, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Medina, and Yarrow Point), as well as the unincorporated areas of Bear Creek, the Sammamish Plateau, and the area southeast of Issaquah.

The East Urban subregion is unique in its population and current situation. The following discussion summarizes the more salient issues facing the area. These features provide part of the background for understanding the human service needs and resources available on the eastside.

**The East Urban subregion is an area of rapid growth and development.** The subregion is experiencing rapid population growth and accelerating development. The rapid development is indicated in recent reports that of all Redmond's growth planned through the year 2012, three-quarters of it is completed, underway or in planning. King County's 1996 Annual Growth Report notes that Issaquah has experienced approximately \$110 million worth of commercial construction since 1992. East Sammamish had the largest numbers of new houses built in 1996 of any area in King County, but also had substantial numbers of new multifamily units. East Sammamish is one of the two fastest growing unincorporated areas, gaining over 1,200 people between 1995 and 1996.

**Housing in the East Urban subregion is expensive and not affordable for many people.** The rapid development and population growth has further impacted the already stressed East Urban housing market with existing affordable housing units quickly disappearing. The East Urban subregion trails only Seattle in average rental costs (\$730/month) and has the highest average house prices (\$229,749) of any subregion. Using conventional assumptions, an income of \$29,200 is needed to afford the average rent and an income of nearly \$70,000 is needed to buy the average home. Increasing rents and housing costs make it difficult for low- and moderate-income families to afford existing housing. In many cases, low-income workers must either commute long distances to jobs or pay too much of their family budgets for housing. This, in turn, means less resources to address other family needs.

**The mismatch between wages and the cost of living is particularly acute on the Eastside and is growing.** While the general impression is that almost all East Urban residents are well-off, many low-income working poor live on the Eastside but are hidden among the affluent. Welfare Reform may increase this income gap for many families. The number of low-income families is expected to increase 136% in the Eastside between 1990 and 2020. The effect on human services is threefold: exceptional stress on families as they struggle to bridge the gap, lack of financial resources to secure needed human services, and less parental time for involvement with their children.

**Inadequate public transportation and traffic congestion are becoming significant problems in the East Urban subregion.** Across the County, vehicle miles traveled per capita increased 38% from 1985 to 1994. This is particularly troublesome in the East Urban subregion as many residents commute to Seattle each day for employment. Rapid development has overwhelmed existing surface streets in many neighborhoods. Data from the County's Concurrency Management System show certain roads in East Sammamish reaching capacity sooner than anticipated, requiring that road improvements be implemented quickly. Inadequate public transportation was the second most frequently identified problem in the Needs Assessment Survey, 1997. Transportation is the most frequently seen barrier to accessing services in the East Urban subregion.

**The East Urban subregion has developed a strong social service infrastructure.** Over time, East Urban funders and service providers have put in place a strong social service infrastructure. There is a comprehensive network of youth serving agencies, including two Youth and Family Services Association member agencies, youth shelters,

in-school counseling programs, and many other programs. There is a well developed family support system with food banks, shelters, teen pregnancy programs, parenting education and other services. There are programs and services for seniors, refugees, disabled citizens, and many other populations. While no one believes that the level of funding is adequate across all the social service programs, the existing infrastructure provides a solid foundation and stabilizing force in the East Urban subregion.

**PRIORITIZED HUMAN SERVICE NEEDS**

Based on the review of documents, community needs assessment, and service provider review, the East Urban Joint Collaboration Team established a set of prioritized human service needs for the subregion and an associated list of suggested investment strategies for addressing them. One underlying assumption in considering human service priorities was that existing, effective service systems would continue with their funding levels maintained. Identification of a community needs priority, therefore, does not mean that work is not being done in the area. Many successful, effective service strategies are currently in place and funders are committed to maintaining service systems that provide critical services. The listed investment strategies represent possible new directions and initiatives in human services funding in the East Urban subregion. Among the systems to be maintained are: domestic violence victim services, housing services, refugee services, senior services, sexual assault services, veteran services, and youth and family services.

The prioritized needs are presented in Table 1 in four broad issue areas that were developed through the East Urban planning process. In recognition of other similar planning efforts which used slightly different needs categories, the table references the related United Way and CSD Strategic Plan categories. These broad issue areas are:

- Housing and related services for special needs residents where these are necessary to avoid institutional settings.
- Basic needs and survival services including transitional settings for homeless of all ages.
- Employment support work force development, including child care.
- Strengthening families, including prevention and reduction of family dysfunction and support for youth.

**TABLE 1**

**EAST URBAN SUBREGION INVESTMENT PRIORITIES FOR HUMAN SERVICES\***

Community Needs Priority	Community Needs Priority	Community Needs Priority	Community Needs Priority
Housing and related services for special needs residents where these are necessary to avoid institutional settings.	Basic needs and survival services including transitional settings for homeless of all ages.	Employment support work force development, including child care.	Strengthening families including prevention and reduction of family dysfunction and support for youth.

<p><b>Related United Way Goal:</b></p> <p><i>Health and Independent Living</i></p>	<p><b>Related United Way Goal:</b></p> <p><i>Basic Needs, Health and Independent Living</i></p>	<p><b>Related United Way Goal:</b></p> <p><i>Economic Self-Sufficiency</i></p>	<p><b>Related United Way Goal:</b></p> <p><i>Supportive Relationships in Families and Communities, Safe, Secure Families and Communities</i></p>
<p><b>Related Strategic Plan Issue Area:</b></p> <p><i>Increasing Family Stability</i></p>	<p><b>Related Strategic Plan Issue Area:</b></p> <p><i>Strengthening Communities</i></p> <p><i>Increasing Family Stability</i></p>	<p><b>Related Strategic Plan Issue Area:</b></p> <p><i>Strengthening Communities</i></p> <p><i>Increasing Family Stability</i></p>	<p><b>Related Strategic Plan Issue Area:</b></p> <p><i>Promoting Youth Success</i></p> <p><i>Increasing Family Stability</i></p> <p><i>Reducing Community Violence</i></p>
<p><b>East Urban Investment Priority</b></p>	<p><b>East Urban Investment Priority</b></p>	<p><b>East Urban Investment Priority</b></p>	<p><b>East Urban Investment Priority</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve ability for the frail, elderly, disabled residents of all ages and other specialized populations to live as independently as their circumstances permit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve ability of individuals and families (especially youth, pregnant and parenting teens, victims of domestic violence) to remain in the East Urban subregion prior to re-establishing permanent/independent living arrangements.</li> <li>● Increase availability of basic survival services, including food and shelter, to all residents requiring these services.</li> <li>● Increase medical/dental services for those without adequate insurance, and legal assistance related to basic needs and survival is available in the East Urban subregion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve education and training opportunities to prepare East Urban residents for family wage employment, to acquire skills to re-enter the workforce, and to improve current job skills.</li> <li>● Increase ability of working families in the East Urban subregion to accept and retain employment of choice without</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve access for youth and families within the East Urban subregion to support, assistance and treatment in building strong family relationships and in resolving family issues, including family violence, mental illness, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual identity and reproductive</li> </ul>

		<p>moving for lack of transportation or affordable housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase availability of affordable, accessible, and quality child care for working families in the East Urban subregion.</li> <li>● Reduce cultural, language and literacy barriers related to employment.</li> </ul>	<p>issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve access to information and skill-building around family relationships, health, drugs, alcohol, sexual identity and reproductive issues which is free of stigma.</li> </ul>
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\* Identification of a community needs priority does not mean that there is not work being done in the area. Many successful, effective service strategies are currently in place and funders are committed to maintaining existing service systems that provide critical services. The listed investment strategies represent possible new directions and initiatives in human services funding in the East Urban subregion. Among the systems to be maintained are: domestic violence victim services, youth and family services, sexual assault services, senior services, housing services, refugee services and veteran services.

#### INVESTMENT PRIORITIES (continued)

<b>Community Needs Priority</b>	<b>Community Needs Priority</b>	<b>Community Needs Priority</b>	<b>Community Needs Priority</b>
<b>Housing and related services for special needs residents where these are necessary to avoid institutional settings.</b>	<b>Basic needs and survival services including transitional settings for homeless of all ages.</b>	<b>Employment support work force development, including child care.</b>	<b>Strengthening families including reduction of family dysfunction and support for youth.</b>
<b><i>Suggested Investment Strategies</i></b>	<b><i>Suggested Investment Strategies</i></b>	<b><i>Suggested Investment Strategies</i></b>	<b><i>Suggested Investment Strategies</i></b>

- Nutrition programs that serve currently under-served populations in a culturally sensitive manner.

- Services to decrease isolation of homebound disabled and elderly populations including those who cannot participate in congregate programs.

- Transportation options to target unmet needs of elderly and disabled populations.

- Assisted living facilities that are available to Medicaid eligible seniors and disabled.

- Respite care for caregivers of the elderly, and the physically and developmentally disabled.

- Better collaboration between mainstream providers and culturally specific providers.

- Screening and intake for multiple services at central locations which provide basic services such as food or shelter to homeless populations.

- Services for the homeless that are culturally competent.

- Transitional group living facilities for youth 17-21 years old.

- Emergency shelter for families and youth.

- Homeless prevention services.

- Visibility and awareness of legal services for those who are homeless, at risk of homelessness and in need of legal assistance to receive or retain basic needs and survival services.

- Collaboration and cooperation in delivery of basic needs and survival services.

- Use of case management models for homeless populations.

- Employment and training opportunities which increase skills to advance in workforce.

- Amendment of work-first rules and funding of child care to enable welfare to work recipients to get family wage jobs.

- Education of youth about non-college career opportunities.

- Transportation options for low and moderate income families to major employment centers, child care, and other essential employment related needs.

- Promotion of family wage jobs.

- Increased income limit for child care subsidies and promotion of affordable child care services.

- ESL/VESL/literacy work force training programs, including employer-based literacy alliances.

- Availability of non-traditional child care (e.g., expanded hours, sick child, special needs, and culturally competent).

- Assistance to families having difficulty in locating child care.

- Prevention efforts for youth and families in eastside communities and schools, including family support such as Healthy Start.

- Advocacy and support services for sexual minority youth.

- Increased access for children, youth, adults and families to treatment services, such as: substance abuse treatment, mental health services, and especially in-patient treatment for youth.

- Capacity of volunteer mentoring programs.

- Respite care services for families in crisis.

- Availability on the eastside of 24 hour in-person professional, culturally competent assistance for youth and families in crisis.

- A comprehensive and coordinated continuum of care services that respond to child abuse and neglect, domestic violence where

			<p>children are involved, and sexual abuse within families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Availability and accessibility of parent education opportunities.</li> <li>● Availability of programs using asset building principles and family support models.</li> <li>● Development and support of programs that promote cultural sensitivity and tolerance among eastside youth.</li> <li>● Promote collaboration between schools and non-school activities for youth.</li> </ul>
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### SELECTED PRIORITY STRATEGIES

As a final step in the subregional planning process, the East Urban Joint Collaboration Team reviewed the suggested investment strategies to determine which ones members could act upon at this time. The selected strategies were divided between those that would be acted upon with broad collaboration and those that would be addressed by only one or two members. These are presented in the table below.

TABLE 2

### EAST URBAN SUBREGION INVESTMENT PRIORITIES FOR HUMAN SERVICES

#### Broad Collaboration

Strategy	Members Participating



**Improve transportation for elderly and disabled populations.**

*All East Urban  
Collaboration  
Members*

The late October, 1998, the proposed County ordinance modifying para-transit policy for the elderly and disabled populations, was amended to provide a role for entities making human services policy in the development of strategies to implement the changes. The changes will include more volunteer transportation, transportation based on community partnerships with service providers, and County financial support for the new modes of transportation. The East Urban priority on improved transportation was a major motivator for the Community Services Division request to amend the proposed ordinance. Bellevue's strategy development includes a potential project with the National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA) to develop transportation options to get Asian elderly to activities on the Eastside and to help home care workers to get to clients' homes.

**Create white paper of human service issues that the subregional planning efforts identified as critically important.**

*All East Urban  
Collaboration  
Members*

This paper would be forwarded to groups which educate and do advocacy with the legislature. Areas mentioned included the importance of increasing subsidies for treatment of both mental illness and chemical dependency, two drivers of homelessness; impacts of recent changes in TANF laws regarding teen parents, laws which did not recall their need to finish high school education before working. This effort would take advantage of our group's identity as impartial human service analysts (not, e.g., providers that legislators can discount as having something to gain from such changes).

**Support child care subsidies for low-moderate income families.**

*All East Urban  
Collaboration  
Members*

United Way is subsidizing child care for families at 175-225% of poverty with children under three. CSD will support other on-going efforts and use the skills and knowledge of its Child Care Program staff to seek new revenue sources to expand the existing subsidy program county-wide and in the East Urban subregion and to maintain the quality of child care. As of October, 1998, 30 potential child care providers from the eastside had been contacted to seek licensing; eleven providers have recently completed the licensing process and are now serving the eastside. The City of Redmond will initiate new Breaking the Boundaries project that will assess how well the Redmond community is caring for its children. The process will include local businesses,

churches, schools, service providers, the city, and interested citizens. DSHS could possibly station a child care training class on the eastside if there were enough participants or participants could be transported to classes held elsewhere.	
<p><b>Expand prevention efforts in support of youth and families.</b></p> <p>Bellevue will support community center/family support model approach in Bellevue and in schools. Kirkland and Redmond will also support this effort. The Eastside Human Services Alliance is committed to maintaining prevention programs and continuum of care in support of youth and families on the eastside. United Way is researching models and methods that are successful in maintaining mentors long-term. The Metropolitan King County Council has recently released \$45,000 to \$50,000 to Eastside Healthy Families programs. The Children and Family Commission has prioritized Family Support program funding in the East Urban subregion since it was identified as a high subregional priority. However, uncertainties in the County's 1999 budget make it unclear to what degree the Commission can contribute to this strategy.</p>	<i>All East Urban Collaboration Members</i>
<p><b>Increase housing stability investments.</b></p> <p>Redmond will advocate for increased investment in the Housing Stability Program. This can be done, given available funds, for All Cities and King Co. It can occur during the annual summer allocations round or when the Interlocal Agreement for CDBG Consortium is renewed. Bellevue will also work to strengthen systems already in place, including the Housing Stability Program.</p>	<i>Redmond, Community Services Division and Bellevue</i>
<p><b>Domestic Violence.</b></p> <p>The Seattle-King County Domestic Violence &amp; Child Protective Services Collaboration Project is funded by CSD's Women's Program and implemented by the Health Department to improve the coordination aspect of services (not necessarily the "comprehensive" nature of available services). The project's expected results will affect all subregions. Women's Program will continue to fund in 1999. Partners for a Healthy Community will work in collaboration with the Women's Program to support this effort.</p>	<i>Community Services Division, Partners for a Healthy Community</i>

## LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT SUBREGIONAL PLANNING

A key objective of using the East Urban subregion as a test case was to learn how the subregional planning process could be improved in other subregions. Granted that each

subregion is unique and that the process must be customized to some degree for each, there were some lessons learned that can benefit all future efforts.

### Management of the Subregional Planning Process

1. The process takes longer than expected. Staff time must be intensely focused on the subregional activities or a longer period for subregional collaboration will be needed.
1. The objectives and products of the process must be very clear. AND participants must be reminded of the products throughout the process.
2. Hold all collaboration meetings within the subregions. This enables local partners to participate more readily and provides CSD staff with more direct exposure to the subregion.
3. It is very useful to have providers at the table but they want to know their role and how their input will be used.
4. A joint project (East Urban needs assessment) is helpful in fostering collaboration. If a joint needs assessment is not needed in future subregions, another joint activity with immediate and mutual benefit will stimulate collaboration.
5. Local funders were the best source of information on active providers in the subregion.
6. It was difficult for Community Services Division staff to be both process facilitators and County representatives. At times, CSD staff hesitated (as facilitators) to develop work products too completely from fear that other partners would perceive this as the County pushing its agenda. This slowed the process considerably. It might be useful to rotate facilitation or contract for management staff in order to free CSD staff to operate as County advocates.
7. Ongoing support to subregions to implement the priorities developed during the process will require continued CSD resources.

### Community Input Process

1. Subregional stakeholders want to be sure you understand their unique situation. An important first step is producing a profile of the subregion.
  1. Interested parties, both inside and outside the subregion, should be regularly apprised of the planning progress. In this way they can keep track of the project and any issues of concern can be quickly addressed.
  2. It is worth it to pay for a good facilitator to conduct the community forums. Facilitators who understand the context and have credibility with the participants can produce better results.
  3. Providers not well acquainted with the project or process have difficulty focusing on needs as opposed to service, especially when considering met versus unmet needs. It might be helpful next time to simplify this process by asking them to operate under the assumption that the current services stay in place.
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